ould see very little of the building without payment, and that only during a certain number of minutes each day. While on this subject, we would allude to the insolent and discreditable behaviour, in his office, of the principal verger at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, a man named Tucker, who seems to regard every person that looks into the nave of that building, in the half-hour previous to divine service on week-day mornings, during which it is open, as committing a robbery; and when the first lesson is over, drives them out of the door with the greatest incivility. We seriously advise this worthy functionary to alter his course before stronger representations are made.

ENGLISH DECORATORS AND THE NEW HOUSE OF LORDS.

Complaints have reached us, that either the Royal Commissioners on the Fine Arts have behaved ill to the decorative artists who submitted works in competition, or that their recommendations are put aside by others. A communication in the *Spectator* of last week contains the whole complaint: we extract from it the following:—

"There are at this time some sixty or eighty decorators — wood-carvers and ornamental painters—at work upon the enrichments of the Chamber of Peers in the new palace; and among them, I believe, are only one or two of those artists whom the commissioners expressly recommended for employment. Certain it is, that the most skilful and experienced practical workmen among the carvers and painters thus recommended have not been engaged; and what makes this still more extraordinary, is the statement of Mr. Pugin, who superintends the interior decorations, that for want of competent assistance from Englishmen he is compelled to send for foreigners.

When the royal commission in 1843 invited the English decorators to send in specimens of their ability in the various branches of ornamental art, no premiums were offered; it being understood that the prizes for successful competitors would be employment. In pursuance of this arrangement, a committee was appointed to inspect the specimens exhibited in the spring of last year at the St. James's Bazaar, and to report on the merits of the artists. These reports, from which I shall presently quote, are printed in the third Report of the commissioners. That the ornamentists whose specimens were approved have been officially recommended to be employed *in preference* to others, I know for certain; having seen letters signed by the secretary to the commission, Mr. Eastlake, and sent for the information of the parties. I can also state of my own personal knowledge, that the artists in question have applied to Mr. Barry for employment, and are both willing and able to enter upon the work, but have been put off with smooth words and promises. Not being aware of any but wood-carvers and ornamental painters being employed at present, I confined my inquiries to these two branches of decoration. Six carvers, namely, Messrs. Cummings, Ollett, Ringham, Freeman, Browne, and J. Thomas, were favourably noticed in the Report of the committee; and another, Mr. Rogers, is especially mentioned in these terms: 'It is the opinion of the committee, that among the carvers whose works have been exhibited he holds the first place; and they consider him as the person best qualified to be entrusted with those parts of the woodwork of the House of Lords in which great richness of effect and delicacy of execution are required.' Nothing can be stronger or more explicit than this. And that the commission adopt the recommendation of the committee is proved by a letter from the secretary, directing Mr. Rogers to communicate with Mr. Barry. Mr. Barry says there is nothing for him to do at present; and bows out the applicant with this flattering excuse,—'There is nothing worthy the exercise of your talent, Mr. Rogers, in the House of Lords!' So that the doors, for which designs were especially required, the stalled and canopied seats of the peers, and the throne, are all to be left to common workmen. The soffits of the ribs of the ceiling, though they are of pierced carving, gilt and relieved upon a coloured ground, cannot be considered very important, since they are cut out of Canadian pine, the commonest and most fragile wood that could be chosen, and a favourite haunt of insect vermin. Of the other six carvers I have only heard of one being employed, and he only as a journeyman; and two individuals might be named who have suffered serious loss and disappointment by leaving their business in the country, in consequence of the committee's recommendation.

'In the department of arabesque painting, the artists noticed in the detailed report of the committee are Mr. Collman, Mr. Goodison, and Messrs. F. and J. Crace,' say the commissioners; and they add the opinion of the committee, that the specimens sent by Mr. Johnson 'evince considerable taste and ability.'

The following significant hint was appended to their report:—'The commissioners, having had reason to suppose that some of the persons who have exhibited works of decorative art *may have employed other hands*, or even the assistance of foreigners, in the execution of such works, have resolved that those persons who may be selected for employment in those branches of decoration shall, if the commissioners think fit, be required to produce specimens of their art, to be completed under such conditions as the commissioners may think necessary.' The meaning of this is, that the commissioners will employ none but practical men—working artists. Mr. Collman is an architect, and employed German painters to execute his design. Messrs. Crace are very respectable shopkeepers, who undertake decorations and employ artists to execute them; but they are men of business and taste, not working artists. Of themselves they are incompetent to the production of the specimen they sent in; on which various artists, French and English, were employed. Mr. Goodison and Mr. Johnson were the only successful competitors in arabesque painting who designed and executed their specimens themselves; yet neither of them is employed; while Messrs. Crace have both the honour and profit accruing from the painted decorations of the House of Lords, which are being executed by foreign and English artists, from designs furnished by Mr. Pugin, and under his direction, to the exclusion of the only two artists who were qualified for employment according to the decision of the committee. To the application of Mr. Goodison, the same flattering answer was given by Mr. Barry—that there was no scope in the House of Lords for the exercise of his talent; it was mere journeyman's work. If this injustice be suffered, the inference is inevitable, that the Royal Commission either wants the will or has not the power to enforce its recommendations. In either case, the artists whose labour has been taxed, and whose hopes have been disappointed, will have good ground of complaint of a breach of faith. The country also will have reason to be dissatisfied that the best native talent has not been engaged on a national work, that is intended to exemplify the highest state of perfection to which British art can attain in this age. The pecuniary loss to several ornamentists, through their being thrown out of employment by competing against their masters, or their giving up private business in the country to come to London, has been almost ruinous.

But, taking a wider view of the matter, there is great cause for regret that such a grand opportunity as this for calling out any original talent in ornamental design that exits in the country should be suffered to escape, by excluding from employment all but merely mechanical copyists of Gothic patterns."

Rare Building Ground. — The beautiful domain known as the White Knights Estate, near Reading, to which we referred a short time ago, is now fairly in the market as building ground. A company is in course of formation to make the roads and drains, build the lodges, and grant leases of plots for building on, and will not fail by a spirited and judicious outlay to secure a large return. The American and Chantilly Gardens, the wilderness and lake are to be reserved for the enjoyment of the inhabitants. It is impossible for the most graphic pen to describe the exquisite grouping of the splendid timber, shrubberies, and the slopes of sward, forming as a whole, perhaps the happiest effort of landscape gardening this or any other country in Europe can produce. We know of no such sites for houses at the same distance from the metropolis, and have little doubt that the shares will be eagerly sought after.

STIR IN THE SCHOOL OF DESIGN.

Sir,—As an article has appeared in your paper of the 16th instant on "the course of study in the school of design," the writer of which appears to have settled the matter very much to his *own* satisfaction, will you permit me to prove that he is either ignorant of the course pursued by the students, *or* that he has endeavoured to produce wilfully erroneous impressions of the grounds of their complaints. After mentioning the opinion of Mr. Pugin, and a previous correspondent in your paper, he goes on to say, "and those most modest remonstrators, the students, consider it utterly useless, as the directors do not adopt that course of study which they, in their wisdom, think fit to prescribe." Immediately following this comes, "But among them all, for my part, I have read no attempt to disclose a practicable remedy." How those two assertions can be both true I do not see, unless the students have offered a practical remedy which Mr. Morgan has not taken the trouble to read. But the first assertion is utterly false, and without the slightest foundation: the students never have attempted to prescribe any course of study, or even to offer any suggestions to the council or the authorities of the school. The facts are simply these:—The council lay down for the students a certain course of study, and they offer to them a certain amount of instruction; they appoint a director and clearly define his duties. Now what are the complaints of the students? They complain that the course of study prescribed by the *council* has never been followed out; that the instruction promised by the *council* has never been given; and, that the duties of the director as defined by the *council* have never been fulfilled. These are questions of facts, not matters of opinion. We have never discussed the merits of the system laid down by the council; we have never attempted to dictate or criticize their plan: we have laid before them depositions which prove (beyond all contradiction) that the instruction promised has never been given, and the duties of the director never fulfilled. If any further proof were wanting, hear the director's own admissions. In a special report of his, delivered to the council on the 4th of February (exactly a month previous to our petition being sent in), he says:—"As the subject of lecturing is of much importance, I wish to state briefly what has been the amount of my efforts to comply with this duty." . . . . . "I have delivered a *very few* written addresses," . . . . . "and from time to time, when a new example or set of examples was purchased, I have prepared myself and delivered a little lecture upon them." And very *little* ones they must have been; and in some very snug corner they must have been delivered; they most certainly were never given to the students, nor did they ever benefit them. One solitary effort was made to get up a lecture upon architecture, but painful to relate, it was found to draw too heavily upon the talents of the director, and it was abandoned. Immediately following the sentences quoted above, he says (speaking of his *little* lectures), "This cannot be deemed any sufficient substitute for the course stipulated for by the council."

At the same meeting of the council at which this report was read "Mr. Wilson was directed to obtain from Mr. Herbert a written statement of the most efficient mode in which he conceives the figure can be taught in the school with reference to ornament." In the report accordingly prepared by Mr. Herbert, he thought fit to suggest that a black board should be used by the director, practically to demonstrate to the students the various points of the lectures upon the history and principles of the various styles of ornament which it was his duty to give. Now, immediately on the sending in this report by Mr. Herbert, Mr. Wilson wrote to him, saying, that in consequence of the feeling which had incited him to suggest to the council the use of the black board, he should hold no further correspondence with him. Now what reason could there be to consider this suggestion as so severe a personal affront. I have attended lectures on various subjects connected with arts and sciences, and I have found it a common (almost a universal) practice for the various professors to draw upon a black board in the presence

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